



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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July 25, 2008

TO: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe *for*  
Acting Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – PHOENIX  
HOUSE OF ORANGE COUNTY GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Phoenix House, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home is a 37-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home was providing services for three DCFS children, six San Diego County children, four Orange County children, one Riverside County child and 17 privately placed children.

Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home is located in Orange County.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews

with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

### **Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement except for a few deficient areas.

Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home needs to teach children daily living, self-help and survival skills and provide age-appropriate children with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs. The Group Home also needs to provide children with sufficient recreational activities and encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

WLW:MMO:DC:CC:asl

### **Attachments**

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS  
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS  
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer  
Roger W. Stephens, Chairman of the Board, Phoenix House of Orange County  
Julie Charlson, Executive Director, Phoenix House of Orange County  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**Phoenix House, Incorporated  
Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home  
Santa Ana, California 92701  
License Number: 300605606  
Rate Classification Level: 5**

**I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Comments:**

Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

**Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Three**

**Comments:**

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

### **Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Three**

### **Comments:**

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. However, the Group Home's program does not include the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Age-appropriate children are not provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Phoenix House of Orange County management:**

- a. Teach children daily living, self-help and survival skills.**
- b. Provide age-appropriate children with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.**

## **IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Three**

### **Comments:**

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have

an interest. The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities.

### **Recommendation**

- 2. Phoenix House of Orange County management provide children with additional recreational activities.**

## **V. Psychotropic Medication**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

#### **Comments:**

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented. Children are also aware of their right to refuse medication.

### **Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **VI. Personal Rights**

### **Method of assessment – Interviews with children**

**Sample size: Three**

#### **Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

### **Recommendation**

There are no recommendations for this section.

## **VII. Clothing and Allowance**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Three**

### **Comments:**

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

### **Recommendation**

- 3. Phoenix House of Orange County management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

1207 E. Fruit Street, Santa Ana, CA 92701 / (714) 953-9373/ FAX (714) 953-9155

# Phoenix Academy

March 18, 2008

Ms. Candace Rhue  
Group Home Audit Supervisor  
Department of Auditor-controller  
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 W. Temple St., Room 515-A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Rhue,

Attached is the revised corrective action plan in response to the group home monitoring review that was conducted on November 06, 2007 at our facility.

This includes the current status of the corrective action plan and the dates for the anticipated completion of outlined actions with areas of responsibilities.

If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you.

Julie Chlarson  
Program Director

cc: Geoff Henderson, Senior Program Director,  
Phoenix House Orange County, Inc.

**Recommendation:**

**III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

**1. Phoenix House of Orange County Management:**

**a. Teach children daily living, self-help and survival skills**

**Status: Implemented**

All children placed at Phoenix Academy are taught daily living, self help and survival skills within the context of a structured and phased program. They each are assigned responsibilities and are accountable to demonstrate competency in daily living. From the Orientation Phase they are taught decision making, communication skills, structured living, hygiene, job responsibilities, planning and the inherent rewards. In the last phase of treatment they are involved in learning skills that facilitate independent living such as money management. They are assigned to a vocation/education counselor to identify plans and to participate in training for job preparation.

In addition, the treatment team develops and implements the individual needs and service plans that include long term goals and steps toward achievement.

**Status: Partially implemented**

**Corrective Action Plan**

The Program Director will meet with all staff to review the recommendations and to ensure that all children are progressing through phase advancement and demonstrating daily living, self help and survival skills. **Date: March 21, 2008**

Complete the hire of vocational/educational counselor. **Date: April 10, 2008**

Implement and utilize the Phoenix House "Living in the Community" curriculum that is designed for self help and living in the community upon completion of treatment. **Date: April 10, 2008**

**Person Responsible to insure that deficiency will not occur again in the future:** Clinical Specialist who will be responsible for the Quality Assurance meetings and reports.

**Quarterly Quality Assurance Meetings**

The Program Director will include the status of compliance and the sustainability of corrective action plans in the quarterly Regional Quality Assurance Meetings. Individual Case Managers will be responsible to ensure phase advancement benchmarks and referral to Vocational/Educational Counselor.

**Quality Assurance person responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective actions remain implemented and is working as intended.**

The Clinical Specialist will be responsible for monitoring.

**b. Provide all children with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.**



**Status: Partially implemented - anticipated completion: April 10, 2008.**

The Orange County Independent Living Program (ILP) requires that a direct referral is made from Social Services in Los Angeles County to them for the enrollment of eligible children placed in Orange County.

Of two children identified as requiring a referral to the ILP in this review, one child was referred and completed both treatment and ILP successfully. The other child attended the ILP and currently is preparing to graduate from Phoenix House. We have three new residents who are not yet ready to complete the ILP program. We have communicated the need for their social worker to make referrals from Los Angeles County Social Services to the Orange County ILP provider. The individual case managers will follow-up so that each resident will be enrolled by the time they enter Phase Three of our program.

**Person responsible to insure that a deficiency will not occur again in the future:** Admissions Coordinator and Case Managers.

The plan and procedure is for the Admissions Coordinator, upon intake, to initiate the request for a referral between agencies/counties to expedite the process.

**Quality Assurance person responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective actions remain implemented and is working as intended.**

Clinical Specialist is responsible for compiling the monitoring data and submitting for QA report.

**Recommendation:**

IV. Recreation and Activities

**2. Phoenix House of Orange County management provide children with additional recreational activities.**

**Status: Anticipated implementation – April 15, 2008**

**Corrective Action Plan**

The Supervising Senior Counselor will amend the current activity schedule to reflect the available recreational activities that are currently being provided and outline the time frames on the schedule.

The activity schedule will include: soccer, basketball, dodge ball, softball, weekly craft projects, weekly team outings (movies, beach, and park), family recreation days, Friday Honors projects at school, times for board games, and outings to amusement parks, horseback riding and mountain hiking.

The newly revised schedule will also include the enriching activities that are provided. These include:

Peer Assistance League (PAL) Camp where residents teach younger children life skills

Art and Creativity for Healing Class

Working with Master Gardners learning landscaping, growing and cultivating food and flowers

Young Americans provide performance workshops weekly; teaching singing, dancing, performing. Results in a community presentation for the public twice a year.

Learning genealogy with the Program Director

In addition, the Supervising Senior Counselor will form a committee that includes children to plan for summer recreational activities and identify resources needed and eligibility requirements for participation. **Date: May 1, 2008**

**Person responsible to insure that a deficiency will not occur again in the future:**

Supervising Senior Counselor

**Quality Assurance person responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective actions remain implemented and is working as intended.**

Clinical Specialist is responsible for the Quality Assurance activities.

**Recommendation:**

VII. Clothing and Allowance

**Phoenix House of Orange County management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

**Status: Implemented Date: December 25, 2007**

**Corrective Action Plan**

Photo Albums and cameras were purchased and distributed to designated participants and craft materials for collage making and scrap booking are included in the weekly craft projects.

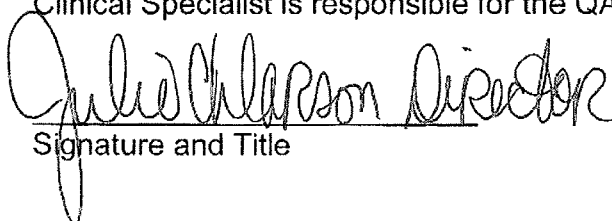
Case Managers will encourage the utilization of the albums and or life books.

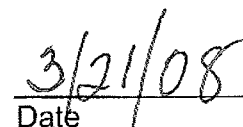
**Person responsible to insure that a deficiency will not occur again in the future:**

Supervising Senior Counselor and Case Managers will report to Program Director.

**Quality Assurance person responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective actions remain implemented and is working as intended.**

Clinical Specialist is responsible for the QA program.

  
Signature and Title

  
Date